

REMARKS

The final Office Action mailed September 1, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-6, 8-14 and 16-18 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-6, 8-14, 17 and 18 stand rejected. Claims 7, 15, 16 and 18 are objected to. Claims 7 and 15 have been canceled.

The Examiner has indicated that dependent Claims 7, 15, 16 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to expedite prosecution, independent Claim 1 has been amended to include limitations similar to the limitations of otherwise allowable dependent Claim 15; independent Claim 4 has been amended to include the limitations of otherwise allowable dependent Claim 7; and independent Claim 11 has been amended to include the limitations of otherwise allowable dependent Claim 15. Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1, 4 and 11 are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is solicited.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10-12, 14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,885,176 to Cunningham (hereinafter referred to as "Cunningham") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,384,501 to Braun (hereinafter referred to as "Braun") is respectfully traversed.

Cunningham describes a dynamoelectric machine with a bearing lubrication system including a shaft (18), a rotor (17) mounted to the shaft (18), and a bearing system (19) including a lubricant reservoir (66). The shaft (18) is coupled to and extends through the bearing system (19) and through a first rubbing seal (61) and a second rubbing seal (62) that are arranged to protect the lubrication system from contaminants. The first rubbing seal (61) is adjacent to a lubricant reservoir cover (66) and the second rubbing seal (62) is adjacent to the face of an end cap (64).

Braun describes a self-centering timing disk hub with a timing disk support surface (1a) and a tubular hub sleeve (1b) extending from the support surface (1a). When operating the disk hub, an end of the hub sleeve (1b) is pushed onto a motor shaft (1d). The hub sleeve (1b) is slotted, forming sleeve portions, in the region of the motor shaft (1d) allowing the

formed sleeve portions to move when a force is applied. To secure the disk hub, a clamping element (2) that surrounds the sleeve (1b) is moved from a rest position to a displaced position. The clamping element (2), in the displaced position, exerts a radial force inward (or toward the motor shaft), thus forcing the portions of the sleeve (1b) to secure the shaft (1d) within the sleeve (1b).

Notably, neither Braun nor Cunningham describes or suggests engaging the hub, having a plurality of spring members coupled to an opening extension, to the output shaft such that at least one spring member is outwardly displaced as the hub receives the output shaft.

Claim 1 recites a method of shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants, wherein the condenser fan motor includes a housing, an output shaft, a dust shield including a shroud with a center opening through the shroud, and a hub extending around a perimeter of the opening and including an opening extension and a plurality of spring members extending from the opening extension. The method includes “fitting the opening of the shroud over the output shaft; inserting the output shaft through the opening; engaging the hub to the output shaft, wherein at least one of said spring members is outwardly displaced as the hub receives the output shaft thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft; and positioning the dust shield adjacent the housing such that the shroud defines an enclosure to encompass a part of the housing to prevent contaminants from reaching a portion of the output shaft adjacent the housing.”

Neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests engaging the hub, having a plurality of spring members coupled to an opening extension, to the output shaft such that at least one spring member is outwardly displaced as the hub receives the output shaft thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft.

Rather, Cunningham merely describes rubbing seals (61, 62) engaging a shaft (18) as the shaft (18) extends through a bearing system (19), and Braun merely describes gripping a motor shaft (1d) that extends through the sleeve (1b) with portions of a hub sleeve (1b) by forcing the portions inward with a clamping element (2).

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is respectfully submitted to be patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Claim 3 depends from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 3 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant submits that dependent Claim 3 likewise is patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Claim 4 recites a condenser fan motor dust shield having an output shaft. The condenser fan motor dust shield includes “a shroud; a central opening through said shroud and configured to receive the output shaft; and a hub extending from said shroud and adapted to obstruct at least a portion of said central opening, said hub comprising an opening extension and a plurality of spring members coupled to said opening extension, each of said spring members separated by an expansion slot, wherein at least one of said spring members is outwardly displaced when the output shaft is received in said central opening.”

Neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a condenser fan motor dust shield as recited in Claim 4. More specifically, and acknowledged by the Examiner, neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a hub including a plurality of spring members coupled to an opening extension such that at least one spring member is outwardly displaced when the output shaft is received in said central opening.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 4 is respectfully submitted to be patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Claims 6, 8 and 10 depend from independent Claim 4. When the recitations of Claims 6, 8 and 10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 4, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 6, 8 and 10 likewise are patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Claim 11 recites a shielded condenser fan motor assembly including “a motor comprising a housing and an output shaft; and a dust shield attached to said shaft, said dust shield comprising a shroud, and a hub extending from said shroud, said hub comprising an opening extension and a plurality of spring members extending from said opening extension, at least one of said spring members outwardly displaced around said output shaft, wherein said shroud forms an enclosure which encloses an area of said housing and said shaft.”

Neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a shielded condenser fan motor assembly as recited in Claim 11. More specifically, and acknowledged by the Examiner, neither Cunningham nor Braun, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a hub including a plurality of spring members extending from an opening extension such that at least one spring member is outwardly displaced around the output shaft.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 11 is respectfully submitted to be patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Claims 12, 14 and 17 depend from independent Claim 11. When the recitations of Claims 12, 14 and 17 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 11, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 12, 14 and 17 likewise are patentable over Cunningham in view of Braun.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant requests that the Section 103(a) rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10-12, 14, and 17 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 2, 5, 9 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cunningham and Braun, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,287,662 to Otto (hereinafter referred to as "Otto") is respectfully traversed.

Cunningham and Braun are described above.

Otto describes a method for assembling a device (11) onto a rotatable shaft so as to preclude contamination. As shown in Figure 2, the device (11) includes an annular surface (45) circumscribing a bore (41). The annular surface (45) includes a flanged portion (17) that also circumscribes the bore (41) and that facilitates directing a shaft (19) through the bore (41) when inserting the shaft (19) into the device (11). The flanged portion (17) does not engage the shaft.

Claim 1 is recited above.

None of Cunningham, Braun and Otto, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, none of Cunningham, Braun and Otto, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests engaging the hub, having a plurality of spring members

coupled to an opening extension, to the output shaft such that at least one spring member is outwardly displaced as the hub receives the output shaft thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft.

Rather, Cunningham merely describes rubbing seals (61, 62) engaging a shaft (18) as the shaft (18) extends through a bearing system (19), Braun merely describes gripping a motor shaft (1d) with portions of a hub sleeve (1b) by forcing the portions inward with a clamping element (2), and Otto merely describes an annular surface (45) having a flanged portion for facilitating the insertion of a shaft (19) through a bore (41).

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is respectfully submitted to be patentable over Cunningham and Braun, in further view of Otto.

Claim 2 depends from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 2 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant submits that dependent Claim 2 likewise is patentable over Cunningham and Braun, in further view of Otto.

Claims 5 and 9 depend from independent Claim 4, which Applicant believes is patentable for at least the reasons set forth above. When the recitations of Claims 5 and 9 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 4, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 5 and 9 likewise are patentable over Cunningham and Braun, in further view of Otto.

Claim 13 depends from independent Claim 11, which Applicant believes is patentable for at least the reasons set forth above. When the recitations of Claim 13 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 11, Applicant submits that dependent Claim 13 likewise is patentable over Cunningham and Braun, in further view of Otto.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant requests the Section 103(a) rejection of Claims 2, 5, 9 and 13 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric T. Krischke
Registration No. 42,769
ARMSTRONG TEASDALE LLP
One Metropolitan Square, Suite 2600
St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2740
(314) 621-5070